

and financing institutions. U.S. think tanks that nurture democratic and free market reforms should also do their part. The next Argentinian president will need all the help we can muster in weaning the country off of the Kirchner brand of cronyism and statism.

The United States has similarly offered assistance to Colombia and Panama as they implemented comprehensive economic, legal and security reforms. Greater security and stronger democratic institutions in those countries have led to increased foreign investment, making their economies more globally competitive. As noted, Argentina can also look hopefully at the example of Peru, which has similarly transitioned from a statist, socialist model to one that embraces free trade, foreign investment and closer engagement with the United States.

Ultimately change will have to begin at home with the choice of the Argentinian people in the upcoming election. If the next president decides to break with the past and steer the country out of the dead end of Kirchnerism and Peronist socialism, and towards free markets and more transparent governance, then the United States should be waiting with an outstretched hand.

A VISION FOR THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Consider a region with growing economic and geopolitical importance, home to several of our highest-value trading partners, with significant immigration into and remittances in and out of the U.S., and presenting security challenges vital to our interests. One would think that such a region would be at the top of the list of our foreign policy priorities.

In reality, this region exists in the Western Hemisphere, but our attention to Latin America has been sporadic and episodic since the 1980's and early-1990's. As we moved away from our Cold War-era attention to the region, we had some promising initial steps with efforts at greater regional integration. However, we failed to follow these initial efforts with needed follow-on measures and consistent policy, due to divisive and distracting issues of domestic politics at home and a focus on the Middle East and South Asia, propelled by the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. As a result, we have been forced to react to events, many of which are dictated by nations openly hostile to the United States.

Whatever the outcome of November 6th might be, the victor has the opportunity, and the responsibility, to build a vision for the reshaping and revitalizing our relationship with the rest of the Western Hemisphere. For the increasingly busy post-campaign transition staffs of President Obama and Governor Romney, it is not too soon to begin laying the groundwork for such a vision.

In a recent exercise we conducted regarding our Western Hemisphere policies and a way forward, we found key items for an Administration's agenda towards the region. An agenda based around an understanding of the need for greater economic ties, a joint approach to security challenges, and shared political and cultural values can be a vision that shows the region that America is not only a power in the region but also a partner.

Through NAFTA and various preceding organizations like the IADB, the United States was once a key driver in the economic integration of the region. There were subsequent free trade agreements with Chile, Colombia, Panama, Peru, and CAFTA-DR with the countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic. While these trade pacts have opened up economic opportunities for the nations involved, we have failed to capitalize on follow-up opportunities that would fur-

ther the economic vitality and integration of the region.

Integration of the economies of the United States and Canada with those of the Caribbean and Latin America can not only provide economic benefits but also address the economic inequality that fuels governments which are hostile to the United States, and deprives these nations of the bounty that their natural and human resources could provide. For all the socialist vitriol of leaders like Hugo Chavez, his promises to improve the lot of impoverished masses have kept him in power. His opponent in the recent election also made clear that he would continue many of these social programs.

Furthermore, these commercial partnerships present a clear alternative to the mercantilist policies of China, provide opportunities for American manufacturers and consumers, and create a bloc of Western Hemisphere nations united in negotiations regarding a Pacific trade agenda.

These commercial ties can also leverage educational exchange in strengthening regional ties. As individuals from the Western Hemisphere come to study at our greatest colleges and universities, we can not only attract the best and brightest talent here, but also strengthen and enrich shared values throughout the region. To accomplish this, we must decouple adverse perceptions about mass immigration from a policy which allows visas for top students and entrepreneurs.

In an era where crime and terrorism have undergone the same globalization as economies and cultures, the security challenges of the Western Hemisphere are not the concern of one nation. Building on the success of Plan Colombia, we can continue the fight against narcoterror across the region, based around a model of mutually reinforcing kinetic operations and the building and strengthening of institutions resistant to the pressures of crime and corruption.

Also, as narcotics move from Latin America through Africa into Europe, these issues are no longer solely an American concern. Our traditional security partners in Europe also have a role in the Western Hemisphere through shared interests and their historical and cultural ties to the region.

While it is often an issue that divides the U.S. from other nations in the region, it must also be understood that the oppression, intellectual bankruptcy, and the aging regime of Cuba present a security risk to all of the Americas.

Beyond these economic and security concerns, the vacuum created by the lack of consistent U.S. attention requires a shift in our political approach to the hemisphere. The OAS, long the main multilateral institution for the hemisphere, is now on life support. While it would be destructive to the organization for the U.S. to withdraw its support for the OAS, the next President must also build a close multilateral relationship with the leaders from the region. While it is true that many question the utility of the regional summits, the President can set forth a U.S. vision for the Western Hemisphere through a summit with the Presidents of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay, and the Prime Minister of Canada.

Such a vision can revitalize our policies and partnerships with the Western Hemisphere. No longer can we take this region for granted as merely our backyard, nor can we miss the opportunities presented by a vibrant, integrated Western Hemisphere.

HONORING I LOVE LIFE

HON. KRISTI L. NOEM

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2017

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a radio program that has shared stories of hope, faith and encouragement for more than 35 years. In a world so often filled with heartbreaking narratives, the I Love Life program and its host, Jerry Dahmen, has showcased the stories of more than 1,500 people who have overcome challenges, achieved the unexpected, and inspired those around them.

I Love Life is broadcast out of KXRB in South Dakota, but can be heard across the country. Its inspirational programming has earned dozens of broadcasting and community awards while tackling some of the time's toughest issues, including teenage suicide, human trafficking, love and loss.

The program may make you laugh or cry, but either way, it's likely to teach you that if you can't change your circumstances, maybe you can change your attitude in a way that focuses on gratitude. Because of this program, millions of listeners across the world have been inspired to join in the chorus saying that I too love life.

A TRIBUTE TO JILL NISWANDER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jill Niswander for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

With a passion for volunteering, Jill left the world of corporate finance and co-founded Dress for Success Des Moines in 2011. Jill later became an advocate for refugees when her career took her into business development at an Iowa community health organization. Now she is the Director of Communications and Fund Development at EMBARC, an advocacy and resource center for Burmese refugees. Additionally, Jill works to empower women by serving on the Board of Directors for the Beacon of Life. Jill is also a proud wife and wonderful mother to four beautiful children.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Jill in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great